



# NEWS RELEASE

*OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI*

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **KC MAN SENTENCED IN DRUG CONSPIRACY**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Kansas City, Mo., man was sentenced today after being convicted in a drug conspiracy that involved 10 co-defendants who have already pleaded guilty and been sentenced.

**Roman A. Rojas**, 29, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright this morning to 33 years, 9 months in prison without parole. The court sentenced **Rojas** to the total of 405 months on 15 counts of a federal indictment, as well as 20 years on each of five additional counts, and five years on another count, all to be served concurrently.

On March 13, 2002, **Rojas** was convicted by a trial jury of all 21 counts of a federal indictment, Graves said. Count One of the federal indictment alleges a conspiracy involving 10 co-defendants and a number of unindicted co-conspirators. Additional counts of the federal indictment allege that **Rojas** aided and abetted the distribution of illegal narcotics, including methamphetamine, cocaine, and marijuana.

According to Graves, **Rojas** managed a large and widespread group of drug traffickers. **Rojas** sold narcotics in several nightclubs and bars to numerous distributors, using employees to distribute narcotics to patrons inside the nightclubs and bars. Graves added that **Rojas** received a stiffer sentence than the standard range of punishment directed by federal sentencing guidelines because he was found by the court to be a manager of the conspiracy, and because he possessed firearms in connection with those offenses.

While on bond, Graves said, **Rojas** fled to Mexico to avoid prosecution, another factor that contributed to his receiving a stiffer sentence. After returning to the United States, **Rojas** was arrested on August 17, 2001 at a restaurant in Overland Park, Kansas.

**(MORE)**

## **DRUG CONSPIRACY**

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### **Additional Defendants**

Nine co-defendants pleaded guilty to Count One of the 44-count federal indictment, with two defendants also pleading guilty to additional counts. One defendant pleaded guilty to a separate count of distribution of cocaine.

\* **Steve J. Romero**, 39, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced to 10 years in prison without parole on June 27, 2001.

\* **Ezequiel Flores**, 31, of Independence, a citizen of Mexico, was sentenced to 5 years, 6 months in prison without parole on May 15, 2001.

\* **William J. Reneau**, 25, of Blue Springs, Mo, was sentenced to 5 years, 6 months in prison without parole on May 15, 2001.

\* **John J. Espinosa**, 27, of Gladstone, Mo., was sentenced to 5 years, 6 months in prison without parole on May 15, 2001.

\* **Leland L. Lewis**, 28, of Blue Springs, Mo., was sentenced to 5 years, 6 months in prison without parole on March 8, 2001.

\* **Dominic J. Messina**, 28, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced to 6 years, 6 months in prison without parole on June 27, 2001.

\* **Francisco M. Diaz**, 26, of Blue Springs, Mo., was sentenced to 7 years in prison without parole on June 12, 2001.

\* **John M. Lopez**, 21, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced to 5 years in prison without parole on February 6, 2001.

\* **Leo J. Johann**, 41, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced to 3 years of probation on January 24, 2001.

\* **Robert O. Messina**, 29, of Blue Springs, Mo., was sentenced to 3 years, 4 months in prison without parole on July 19, 2001.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael S. Oliver. It was investigated by the Jackson County Drug Task Force, the U.S. Customs Service, the Internal Revenue Service, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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